

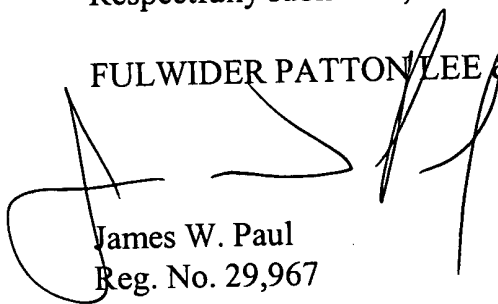
Serial No. 09/865,021

REMARKS

In light of the foregoing amendments, favorable consideration of the application is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

FULWIDER PATTON LEE & UTECHT, LLP

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'James W. Paul', is written over the printed name and registration number.

James W. Paul  
Reg. No. 29,967

JWP:rvw

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Return Postcard

Howard Hughes Center  
6060 Center Drive, Tenth Floor  
Los Angeles, California 90045  
Telephone No. (310) 824-5555  
Facsimile No. (310) 824-9696

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Serial No. 09/865,021

VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

At page 1, in the paragraph entitled "Related Applications:" from lines 1-4, please amend the paragraph to read as follows:

Related Applications:

This is a continuation of Serial No. 09/219,572 filed December 22, 1998,  
now Patent No. 6,240,231, which [This] is a continuation-in-part of Serial No.  
08/996,053 filed December 22, 1997, abandoned.

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Amended) A variable stiffness optical fiber shaft for use in interventional therapy, comprising:

an optical fiber having a proximal end and a distal end;

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a tapered reinforcing tube bonded [attached] to said optical fiber, said optical fiber extending therethrough, the reinforcing tube having a thickness that varies over the length of the reinforcing tube; and

a reinforcing braid attached over said optical fiber and over a distal portion of said reinforcing tube[;

at least one layer of heat shrink material attached over said reinforcing tube, said reinforcing braid, and said optical fiber, to thereby provide a composite shaft with variable stiffness along its length].

20. (Amended) A method of constructing a variable stiffness optical fiber shaft comprising the steps of:

providing an optical fiber, said optical fiber having a proximal end and a distal end;

[attaching] bonding a tapered reinforcing tube to a proximal portion of said optical fiber, said optical fiber extending through said reinforcing tube, the reinforcing tube having a thickness varying over the length of the reinforcing tube; and

applying a reinforcing braid over a middle to distal portion of said optical fiber[;

shrinking at least one layer of heat shrink material over said reinforcing tube, said reinforcing braid, said radiopaque marker, and said optical fiber, to thereby provide a composite shaft with variable stiffness along its length].